

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY

Voluntary - Public

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Mexico

Post: Mexico

Mexican Inspection Points will Close from Dec. 31 to Jan. 3

Report Categories:

Trade Policy Incident Report

Agricultural Situation

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Report Highlights:

FAS Mexico City has been notified by The National Service of Agro Alimentary Health, Safety, and Quality (SENASICA) that Import Inspection Points (OISAS) will be closed from December 31, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. until January 3, 2010 at 10:00 p.m. This closure will allow for updating import databases used by inspection personnel. Thus, all import documents must be submitted prior to 1:00 p.m. December 31, 2009, but any outstanding import documents not completed before December 31 at 3:00 p.m. must be resubmitted on January 4, 2010.

General Information:

FAS Mexico City received a letter signed by the Director General of Sanitary Inspections informing of

the closure of OISAS at 1:00 p.m. on December 31, 2009, until 10:00 p.m. on January 3, 2010.

Below is a free translation of the letter:

*Mr. Allan Mustard
Minister Counselor of Agricultural Affairs
U.S Embassy, Mexico City, Mexico*

By this way, I communicate that this Ministry during the period of December 31, 2009 until January 3, 2010, will conduct maintenance of the system of information of the Pytosanitary Inspection (SIFF) which allows the system to validate the requirements for Import Certificates of agricultural goods.

In this order, the activities to be carried out are:

Thursday, December 31, 2009

- 1:00 PM The electronic verification system for Customs Agents will be closed.*
- 2:00 PM The offices for the Inspection of Agricultural Health located at the Mexico point of entry will stop receiving import documents*
- 3:00 PM The OISA will stop all operations. The system will allow for the input or the release of import documents. The cases which have not been completed prior to this time will need to be re-submitted (new case number) on January 4, 2010*

Sunday January 3, 2010

- The information technology team will complete all tests of the new system in order to have the system available at 10:00 PM.*

These actions will allow for a better system in electronic communication between SAT and other private organizations and will provide resources to provide a better service in validating the import documents of agricultural goods.

For this reason, we appreciate your support to make known these actions to your members to allow sufficient time for the imports of products which are regulated by this Ministry in order to avoid a bottle neck of imports at inspection points during the end of the year.

Without any other manner, I send you my greetings.

Ing. Arturo Calderon Ruanova

FAS-MEXICO CITY COMMENTS:

In summary, this IT system maintenance will only affect operation for about five hours on Thursday, December 31, 2009, and for a half-day on Saturday, January 2, 2010. Furthermore, SENASICA confirmed that, historically, during this time of the year only 5 percent of ALL commercial trade crosses the border. Thus, the action by SENASICA should not present a difficulty to U.S. exporters.

However, it is important that all U.S. exporters adjust their shipping schedules to adhere to the time schedule as outline above. In addition, U.S. exporters should anticipate delays on January 4 and 5 due

to this minor shut down of the border inspection points.

These actions will affect all U.S. agricultural exports to Mexico which need a SENASICA import permit, except pets traveling with a tourist.